

Correspondence.

CALL THE CONVENTION.

Some Brief but Pointed Reasons Why it Should be Held.

EDITOR PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—Col. Burgwyn's idea of holding a Farmers' Convention is a good one and will commend itself to all who desire to learn, but those who know it all and cannot be taught anything will not see any good in the Convention. All other professions have demonstrated that organizations and associations have helped them, illustrating the old adage, "that two heads are better than one, if one is a sheep's head." Farmers have been taught that each was independent, or ought to be. That might have answered fifty years ago. Steam and electricity have completely changed our environments. Organizations and corporations are governments now: Laws are passed at their dictation. Taxes are levied in the name of "American labor," that they may collect millions of dollars for themselves. The farmers (each) independent. Who taught them that? Some intellectual lions. To those who are satisfied with their independence, I commend the following fable, written more than 2500 years ago: "Three bulls for a long time pastured together. A lion lay in ambush in hope of making them his prey, but was afraid to attack them whilst they kept together. Having at last, by guileful speeches, succeeded in separating them, he attacked them without fear, as they fed alone, and feasted on them, one by one, at his leisure." If there was no other reason than the one hinted at above, it would be well for the farmers to meet in Convention. But much can be learned from the discussion of purely agricultural subjects. Our people learn more by "the friction of mind upon mind" than from all the schools and colleges. Township clubs, county clubs and State Conventions will do more to develop our agriculture, to elevate our manhood, to protect our interest, and command that respect from other professions to which we are entitled, than all the speeches of the intellectual lions, budding and blooming once every two years, only to be killed by the frost of the power of organizations or corporations.

NOTES FROM ENDERLY.

FROM LINCOLN COUNTY.

A Word for the Progressive Farmer—Wheat Sowing, Broom Making and Clover Seed.

LINCOLNTON, N. C.,
Dec. 3, 1886.

EDITOR PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—I am one of your subscribers, I met you on the fair grounds in Hickory and there subscribed for your valuable paper. I like it very much. I read several of our State papers, and part of the time the paper is so thin and the print so bad that it can scarcely be read. (This makes a man mad.) Your print and paper are both excellent.

I think most of the farmers finished wheat sowing this week. I am a farmer and a broom maker, have regular broom machinery, and turn my own broom handles. I use the untapered handle, though I prefer the tapered, I think it proportions a broom better. I retail all my brooms at 25 cents each, can complete about 20 brooms per day when everything is ready to my hand. I had expected to raise a large quantity of the straw this summer on my bottom land, but the wet season set in and I did not get much planted. I buy all the straw I can get—have never paid higher than 5 cents per pound. I bought 1,300 pounds from one man at that price. If any of your readers have long and bright-brushed broom-corn seed, I would be glad to receive a quantity. I have bought seed several times from Northern seedsmen and got cheated every time. The brush would come out crooked and very short.

Our farmers are sowing about the usual amount of wheat and sowing lots of clover seed. I think there is a great falling off in the use of guano this fall. A man can't use it when cotton only brings 8½ cents and wheat 80 cents a bushel. The Sigman & Heavner threshing company threshed 650 bushels clover seed in Lincoln and Catawba counties this fall. Several other companies threshed, but I have not ascertained the quantities. Would be glad to

see an article on broom-corn culture at any time in your paper.

Wishing you much success, I am yours,
J. C. WARLICK.

BREEDING MARES.

For many years the practice of breeding mares on the seventh or ninth day after foaling has become such an abuse that I am prompted by a humane feeling to offer a protest in their behalf. Every intelligent man well knows that this is contrary to all laws, and must necessarily destroy the functions of reproduction, besides detrimental towards life, vigor and health of the fetus in Utero. This constant condition of conception and carrying not only destroys the power of the uterus and its contents, but acts directly upon the health of the mother. I know full well that some gentlemen are willing to cite instances where mares have thrown one, two or even more colts in succession of first class calibre, yet hundreds stare you in the face to the contrary. There is no doubt in my mind that if old Hira, Aerolite and many others received a reasonable time after foaling (say two months or a year,) we would have had more representatives from these illustrious dams. In no instance can I call to mind during fifteen years of constant practice with human mother, where quick conception and rapid births have not left a diseased, broken down and cut short life.

I trust these few lines will reach the hearts of some breeders who will give our grand and great mares a chance.—Dr. F. E. Corrigan, in *Live Stock Record*

FERTILIZING WITH BRAIN.

We do not believe the time has come when the small farmer can successfully conduct his business without performing some manual labor, nor when the large farmer can attain marked success without that intimate knowledge of his work that comes from actual participation in it. But we do most fully believe that the day is forever passed when the chief reliance of the successful farmer, whether his acres be few or many, can be placed upon manual industry, however persistent if undirected by a mind conversant with the progress of the times in all that relates to his business. In the past, when the apparently unbounded West offered its fertile soil free for the taking, and when America held monopoly of the railways and improved implements of husbandry there was some excuse for the hand-to-mouth policy which has been the chief characteristic of our agriculture; but the day of free homesteads is almost ended, while the extension of the use of agricultural machinery throughout the old world, the development of agricultural resources of the southern hemisphere, and especially the bringing of the half-naked farmers of India into direct and close competition with ourselves through the medium of the railroad and steamship—all these are steadily and surely taking from us the vantage ground we have heretofore held as food producers for the world. One thing is certain, and that is if the American farmer would retain this vantage ground, he must bring to his work something more than brawn—something more than brawn reinforced by mechanical ingenuity. These have served us well in the past, but henceforth they must take a secondary place, yielding the first rank to a still higher exercise of the intellect than that which has given us the steam engine and the modern harvester.—*Farm, Stock and Home.*

THE PEANUT CROP.

The peanut crop of the United States is a more important one than most people suppose. The following figures will show the States which grow the crop, also supply and consumption:

	Bushels.
Stocks in all markets Oct. 1, 1885.....	985,000
Tennessee crop.....	800,000
Virginia crop.....	1,800,000
North Carolina crop.....	150,000
Total supply.....	3,735,000
Less stocks on Oct. 1, '86.....	1,019,700

Total consumption 1885-86.....2,715,300
Total consumption 1884-85.....2,905,000
In addition to the above figures and which do not enter into account as above, New York holds 8,000 bags, Philadelphia, 6,000 and Boston 5,000 bags.

Farm Notes.

EXTRA FEED FOR CALVES.

The first Winter of a calf's life is a hard one, but good, warm stabling and two quarts of oatmeal daily, in addition to their other rations, will be well repaid in growth and earlier maturity. With good feeding, a heifer should drop her first calf before she is two years old.

CHERRIES FOR MARKET.

In localities adapted to the growth of the cherry no fruit grows better. It is a sure annual bearer, and the demand for canning will long prevent the prices going below profitable rates. But before planting largely the soil must be made dry either by natural or artificial drainage. Cherry roots go deeply into dry soil, and are more injured by stagnant water.

FIRE HEAT FOR SEED CORN.

Corn is a tropical plant and can scarcely be hurt by heat in any stage. Some are afraid to use fire heat in drying it for seed, but so long as the corn remains damp, a temperature of 100° will not injure it. The more thoroughly and quickly it is dried the greater chance of having a healthy, vigorous growth when it is planted. If it is hung where the ears will be in the smoke while drying, it will be some protection against attack from worms after planting.

THOROUGHBRED POULTRY.

Few except fanciers will take the pains to keep thoroughbred poultry, which requires a good deal of culling out of inferior specimens, or else the pedigree will be of no avail. This culling should always be done once a year, when the flock is reduced for wintering. But after doing this it will pay the owners of every flock to destroy all their own roosters, whether mongrel or otherwise, and procure thoroughbred males from some poulterer who makes the growing of thoroughbreds a specialty.

PHOSPHATE ON POTATOES.

Farmers who use commercial fertilizers have found excellent results in dressing them with phosphate, though potash rather than phosphate is the mineral that they show on analysis. The advantage of the commercial phosphate is that it generally contains an excess of sulphuric acid, used in making it soluble, and this acts on the soil to liberate its fertility and make it available and it has further effect of destroying the fungus growth, which causes the scab. It is not, however, a preventive of potato rot, which is apt to attack the smoothest, largest and best tubers.

MILKING IN WINTER.

As cold weather approaches the natural tendency to shrink the yield of milk is apt to be increased by the carelessness of the milker. When the cow is half dry it seems a small matter to leave a slight portion of the milk in the udder, though to do so is the certain way to make the cow go dry entirely. The first effect is to have a little ropy milk left at the bottom of the pail, which is the rich milk left in the teats from the last milking. As the yield decreases so the richness increases, so that getting the last drop of milk becomes if possible, more important in winter than in summer.

PROTECTING ORCHARDS FROM COLD.

When the ground is so thoroughly frozen and covered with snow it is a good plan to draw manure and spread over the snow and frozen ground under the trees. A covering of straw is better than nothing as the object is protection from deeper freezing of the ground. With this covering the snow under the trees will be kept from blowing away or thawing until late in the Spring. By this means the early-blooming fruit buds will be kept back until the danger or Spring frosts has passed, and it is also some protection to peach trees against Winter killing by severe cold.

KEEPING ONIONS.

The essential requirement in keeping onions is that they be kept in a dry place and not too warm. Most cellars are too damp. They may freeze without injury provided they are in a place where they will stay frozen all winter. Repeated freezing and thawing soon destroys them. Freezing does not injure them for planting as it is the custom among seedsmen to plant onions late in the fall, ridge them up and leave them in the ground all Winter

when the soil often freezes far below the onion set. It is probable that the onion thus frozen does not thaw out until spring and then the frost is drawn out by the thawed soil around it.

FARROW COWS.

It is common for farmers who have a number of cows to dry them off after eight or ten or at most twelve months of the greatest flow of milk has passed. This good policy for those that are thus situated, as a cow giving only three to five or six quarts of milk daily is worth more to fatten than to keep for what milk she will give. But for a small family, where but little milk and butter is required, a good farrow cow may prove a desirable requisition. A really good cow may be milked two years or even three or four with proper management, and give nearly a constant mess during that time. It is the drain on the cow from the calf she is carrying that necessarily shortens the milking period, however good the feeding.

THE USES OF STRAW.

The value of straw is too little taken into account on or off the farm. Too many farmers seem to act on the principle that it should be fed to cattle. This is the least important of its uses. Its value as food is so slight that cattle fed exclusively on straw would die about as soon as if fed on any such substance, as dead leaves, for instance, the only use of which is to properly distend the stomach. The feeding use of straw, therefore is only in connection with concentrated food.

But there are other uses of the straw of cereal plants which render it an important integer in farm economy. One of these is the covering of sheds. Another and its most important use is bedding for animals. Another use to which it may be profitably put when cold and winds are severe, is in forming an impervious barrier, by filling a space a foot wide between two rough walls of sheds. These walls may be made of any rough material, as slabs or poles, but near enough together to prevent the pulling out of straw by the animals. Thus sheds and stables may be rendered as warm as much more costly structures.

The use of straw is too much ignored as a means of comfort used as bedding for animals. Under sheds it should be laid a foot thick and in the yards not less than six inches. In stables that are regularly cleaned it should not be less than six inches in thickness. Thus it will fully soak up and hold the liquids and retain them while spread on the land to be plowed under. It takes no more material as bedding six inches in thickness than less, for only the soiled portions need be removed. The added value to the animal in conserving warmth is not generally estimated.

It not only keeps the animals comfortable, but as manure straw is valuable principally in proportion to the liquid manure it has soaked up. It will pay to use liberally in the directions we have mentioned, and less so as food in Winter than is generally practiced.—*Farm, Field and Stockman.*

FOLLY.

Maine has during the last year put up 10,701,600 cans of corn, over 840,000 cans of succotash, and over 144,000 cans of lima beans. Three Portland firms have done most of the business.—*N. Y. Sun.*

Maine is naturally about the poorest of States. It is filled with energetic, money-making people. They are "smart enough" to furnish North Carolina consumers with their corn and beans and succotash. Here every kind of vegetable may be grown. Here the trucker can work almost the year around. Here farming goes on uninterruptedly during eleven months of the year. Here the soil in most sections is generous and readily responsive to the demands of the planter. But the South leans on the North for the very things it can produce without limit, and goes up to the ice banks of rock-ribbed Maine, where in places the soil must be brought from the distance before cultivation begins, to obtain its fresh corn and bean pies, and to other Northern sections for its supply of tomatoes and cabbage. Was there ever such folly? Only in seeing a Southern farmer feeding his horses and mules on Northern hay. The South has a vast deal to learn. It has not got beyond B in the alphabet of self-sustaining.—*Wilmington Star.*

CLOVER AND TIMOTHY TOGETHER.

It is undoubtedly true that more timothy is produced when it is grown alone, than when it is grown in a mixture with clover. It cures more rapidly alone than with clover. It has a greater sale, at a higher price. On the other hand, the farmer cannot give up clover as a part of his rotation without serious loss. Clover has apparently the power of using nitrogen which is not available to other plants, such as true grasses, cereals, etc. Its deep roots draw upon the plant foods that have been stored up in the subsoil, and carry back to the surface large quantities of nitrogen, potash, phosphoric acid and food supplies. So much of this material is stored in the surface roots of the clover, that even after a heavy crop of hay has been removed, there remains in the surface soils a large quantity of nitrogen and ash constituents above the original amount, thus forming a very efficient and cheap fertilizer. It is said to store up in this manner more than enough nitrogen for four crops of wheat, and more mineral foods than will be required for the three succeeding crops of corn, oats and wheat. To retain such an efficient and economical manure is certainly a great object.

If the chief hay crop is timothy, this will be impossible. Timothy fed off from the farm impoverishes the surface soil rapidly, and if fertility is to be maintained, requires the use in the rotation of large quantities of purchased manure. But clover hay finds poor sale, is difficult to cure, from the danger both of mildew and of the loss of the leaves, which dry more rapidly than the coarse stems, and which contain more digestible material. By adding timothy, the danger of the loss of a hay crop by conditions adverse to either crop separately, is lessened. The two crops feed on different portions of the soil, and require somewhat different foods. Thus an economy in food results. A greater weight of hay is produced than when either crop is grown singly. The mixed hay cures more rapidly than clover alone, and the loss of clover leaves is largely prevented. The mixed hay is in many respects better food than the pure timothy, unless the latter be supplemented by nitrogenous ryefodders. Mixed hay is quoted at prices about half way between those of pure No. 1 timothy and clover. The increased crop makes up in part for the difference in price, and under most circumstances the manurial value of the clover crop far exceeds the remaining difference.

The most serious objection to the practice of mixing is the difference in the time of blossoming of the two crops. On many clay soils this is lost, because the clover matures less rapidly. Timothy, however, is usually allowed to reach a stage of development beyond that at which it is benefitted for an exclusive food. It is altogether more digestible, and contains absolutely more digestible nitrogenous matter at the time of blooming, than the much greater weight of a later cutting will contain. Therefore in practice, the interval between the cutting and the blooming of the clover may, in most instances, be diminished with profit, especially when a large stock of carbonaceous foods is already provided in the form of corn fodder.

Weighing all the pros and cons, it is evident that for the general farmer the mixed hay will in all probability be the most profitable.—*Prof. William Frear, State Agricultural College, Pennsylvania.*

WE ENDORSE THIS.

The *Charlotte Democrat*, one of the most sensible papers in the State, noticing the report that a company of Northern lumber men were contemplating the purchase of 250,000 acres of timber land in North Carolina, says:

"Persons who sell large bodies of land to foreign individuals or a corporation will have cause to regret it after awhile. When native Southern people get clear of their lands, which many of them seem anxious to do, they and their children will soon become 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for the non-residents and foreigners. Sell some of your land at moderate rates to those who want to settle on it and cultivate it but not to speculators and adventurers in large tracts at cheap prices.